

**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-520. Appropriate Licensing and Assignment of Teachers.**

**R277-520-1. Definitions.**

A. "At will employment" means employment that may be terminated for any reason or no reason with minimum notice to the employee consistent with the employer's designated payroll cycle.

B. "Board" means the Utah State Board of Education.

C. "Comprehensive Administration of Credentials for Teachers in Utah Schools (CACTUS)" means the electronic file maintained on all licensed Utah educators. The file includes information such as:

(1) personal directory information;

(2) educational background;

(3) endorsements;

(4) employment history;

(5) professional development information; and

(6) a record of disciplinary action taken against the educator.

D. "Composite major" means credits earned in two or more related subjects, as determined by an accredited higher education institution.

E. "Content specialist" means a licensed educator who provides instruction or specialized support for students and teachers in a school setting.

F. "Core academic subjects or areas" means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Title IX, Part A, 20 U.S.C. 7801, Section 9101(11).

G. "Demonstrated competency" means that a teacher shall demonstrate current expertise to teach a specific class or course through the use of lines of evidence which may include completed USOE-approved course work, content test(s), or years of successful experience including evidence of student performance.

H. "Eminence" means distinguished ability in rank, in attainment of superior knowledge and skill in comparison with the generally accepted standards and achievements in the area in which the authorization is sought as provided in R277-520-5.

I. "Highly qualified" means a teacher has met the specific requirements of ESEA, NCLB, Title IX, Part A, 20 U.S.C. 7801, Section 9101(23).

J. J-1 Visa means a visa issued by the U.S. Department of State to an international exchange visitor who has qualified by training and experience to work in U.S. schools for a period not to exceed three years. Such international exchange visitors may qualify for "highly qualified" status under NCLB only if assigned within their subject matter competency.

K. "LEA" means a school district or charter school.

L. "Letter of authorization" means a designation given to an individual for one year, such as an out-of-state candidate or

individual pursuing an alternative license, who has not completed the requirements for a Level 1, 2, or 3 license or who has not completed necessary endorsement requirements and who is employed by a school district. A teacher working under a letter of authorization who is not an alternative routes to licensing (ARL) candidate, cannot be designated highly qualified under R277-520-1I.

M. "Level 1 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued upon completion of an approved preparation program or an alternative preparation program, or pursuant to an agreement under the NASDTEC Interstate Contract, to candidates who have also met all ancillary requirements established by law or rule.

N. "Level 2 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued after satisfaction of all requirements for a Level 1 license as well as completion of Entry Years Enhancements (EYE) for Quality Teaching - Level 1 Utah Teachers, as provided in R277-522, a minimum of three years of successful teaching in a public or accredited private school, and completion of all NCLB requirements at the time the applicant is licensed.

O. "Level 3 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued to an educator who holds a current Utah Level 2 license and has also received, in the educator's field of practice, National Board certification or a doctorate in education or in a field related to a content area under R277-501-1M from an accredited institution.

P. "License areas of concentration" are obtained by completing an approved preparation program or an alternative preparation program in a specific area of educational studies such as Early Childhood (K-3), Elementary 1-8, Middle (5-9), Secondary (6-12), Administrative/Supervisory, Applied Technology Education, School Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker, Special Education (K-12), Preschool Special Education (Birth-Age 5), Communication Disorders.

Q. "License endorsement (endorsement)" means a specialty field or area earned through course work equivalent to at least an academic minor (with pedagogy) or through demonstrated competency; the endorsement shall be listed on the Professional Educator License indicating the specific qualification(s) of the holder.

R. "Major equivalency" means 30 semester hours of USOE and local board-approved postsecondary education credit or CACTUS-recorded professional development in NCLB core academic subjects as appropriate to satisfy NCLB highly qualified status.

S. "No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)" means the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, P.L. 107-110, Title IX, Part A, Section 9101(11).

T. "Professional staff cost program funds" means funding provided to school districts based on the percentage of a district's professional staff that is appropriately licensed in the areas in which staff members teach.

U. "State qualified" means that an individual has met the Board-approved requirements to teach core or non-core courses in

Utah public schools.

V. "SAEP" means State Approved Endorsement Program. This identifies an educator working on a professional development plan to obtain an endorsement.

W. "USOE" means the Utah State Office of Education.

#### **R277-520-2. Authority and Purpose.**

A. This rule is authorized by Utah Constitution, Article X, Section 3 which vests general control and supervision of public education in the Board, Section 53A-1-401(3) which gives the Board authority to adopt rules in accordance with its responsibilities, and Section 53A-6-104(2)(a) which authorizes the Board to rank, endorse, or classify licenses. This rule is also necessary in response to ESEA NCLB.

B. The purpose of this rule is to provide criteria for local boards to employ educators in appropriate assignments, for the Board to provide state funding to local school boards for appropriately qualified and assigned staff, and for the Board and local boards to satisfy the requirements of ESEA in order for local boards to receive federal funds.

#### **R277-520-3. Required Licensing.**

A. All teachers in public schools shall hold a Utah educator license along with appropriate areas of concentration and endorsements.

B. LEAs shall receive assistance from the USOE to the extent of resources available to have all teachers fully licensed.

C. LEAs are expected to hire teachers who are licensed or in the process of becoming fully licensed and endorsed. Failure to ensure that an educator has appropriate licensure consistent with timelines provided in R277-501 may result in the USOE withholding all LEA funds related to salary supplements under Section 53A-17a-153 and R277-110 and educator quality under Section 53A-17a-107(2) and R277-486 until teachers are appropriately licensed.

#### **R277-520-4. Appropriate Licenses with Areas of Concentration and Endorsements.**

A. An early childhood teacher (kindergarten through 3) shall hold a Level 1, 2, or 3 license with an early childhood license area of concentration.

B. An elementary teacher (one through 8) shall hold a Level 1, 2, or 3 license with an elementary license area of concentration.

C. An elementary content specialist in Fine Arts or Physical Education shall hold a Level 1, 2, or 3 license with an elementary license area of concentration or a secondary license area of concentration with the appropriate K-12 subject/content endorsement.

D. An elementary content specialist in reading or English as a Second Language shall hold a Level 1, 2, or 3 license with an

elementary license area of concentration with the appropriate subject/content endorsement or a secondary license area of concentration with the appropriate subject/content endorsement. Placing a content specialist in a setting out of the specialist's license area of concentration shall be based on exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the USOE.

E. A secondary teacher (grades 6-12) including high school, middle-level, intermediate, and junior high schools, shall hold a Level 1, 2, or 3 license with a secondary license area of concentration with endorsements in all teaching assignment(s).

F. A teacher with a subject-specific assignment in grades 6, 7 or 8 shall hold a secondary license area of concentration with endorsement(s) for the specific teaching assignment(s) or an elementary license area of concentration with the appropriate subject/content endorsement(s).

G. An elementary (grades 7-8), a secondary or middle-level teacher may be assigned temporarily in a core or non-core academic area for which the teacher is not endorsed if the local board requests and receives a letter of authorization from the Board and the teacher is placed on an approved SAEP.

H. Secondary educators with special education areas of concentration may add content endorsement(s) to their educator licenses consistent with R277-520-10 (SAEP).

I. Educators who have qualified for a J-1 Visa as an international visitor and have provided documentation of holding the equivalent of a bachelors degree, subject content mastery, and appropriate work/graduate training may qualify for a Utah Level 1 license. Such temporary visitors may be exempted, at the employer's discretion, from subject content testing, license renewal requirements, and EYE requirements for the duration of their visa eligibility.

#### **R277-520-5. Routes to Utah Educator Licensing.**

A. In order to receive a license, an educator shall have completed a bachelors degree at an approved higher education institution and:

(1) completed an approved institution of higher education teacher preparation program in the desired area of concentration; or

(2) completed an approved alternative preparation for licensing program, under alternative routes to licensing, consistent with R277-503.

B. An individual may receive a Utah license with an applied technology area of concentration following successful completion of a USOE-approved professional development program for teacher preparation in applied technology education.

C. An individual may receive a district-specific, competency-based license under Section 53A-6-104.5 and R277-520-8.

#### **R277-520-6. Eminence.**

A. The purpose of an eminence authorization is to allow individuals with exceptional training or expertise, consistent with R277-520-1G, to teach or work in the public schools on a limited basis. Documentation of the exceptional training, skill(s) or expertise may be required by the USOE prior to the approval of the eminence authorization.

B. Teachers with an eminence authorization may teach no more than 37 percent of the regular instructional load except as provided in R277-520-6C.

C. In identified circumstances, teachers with an eminence authorization may teach more than 37 percent of the regular instructional load. An eminence authorization may be approved by the Board if:

(1) the LEA can find no other qualified individual to fill the position, then:

(a) the LEA shall submit the following documented information to the USOE annually:

- (i) description;
- (ii) recruitment efforts;
- (iii) the qualifications of all applicants; and
- (iv) the LEA's rationale for hiring the individual.

(b) the USOE shall review the information within 15 days of receipt.

(c) the USOE shall notify the individual and the LEA if the USOE approves the documented information.

(d) the LEA shall submit a request for a Letter of Authorization to the Board for the individual through normal administrative procedures; or

(2) An individual has exceptional skills, expertise, and experience that make him the primary candidate for the position, then:

(a) the LEA shall submit the following documented information to the USOE annually:

- (i) information about the position;
- (ii) the individual's expertise, and experience; and
- (iii) the LEA's rationale for hiring the individual.

(b) the USOE shall review the information within 15 days of receipt.

(c) the USOE shall notify the individual and the LEA if the USOE approves the documented information.

(d) the LEA shall submit a request for a Letter of Authorization to the Board for the individual through normal administrative procedures.

D. LEAs shall require an individual teaching with an eminence authorization to have a criminal background check consistent with Section 53A-3-410(1) prior to employment by the LEA.

E. The LEA that employs the teacher with an eminence authorization shall determine the amount and type of professional development required of the teacher.

F. An LEA that employs teachers with eminence authorizations

shall apply for renewal of the authorization(s) annually.

G. Eminence authorizations may apply to individuals without teaching licenses or to unusual and infrequent teacher situations where a license-holder is needed to teach in a subject area for which he is not endorsed, but in which he may be eminently qualified.

#### **R277-520-7. State Qualified Teachers.**

A. A teacher has a Utah Level 1, 2 or 3 license or a district-specific competency-based license.

B. A teacher has an appropriate area of concentration.

C. A teacher in grades 6-12 has the required endorsement for the course(s) the teacher is teaching by means of:

(1) an academic teaching major from an accredited postsecondary institution, or a passing score on content test(s) and pedagogy test(s), if available, or USOE-approved pedagogy courses; or

(2) an academic major or minor from an accredited postsecondary institution; or

(3) completion of a personal development plan under an SAEP in the appropriate subject area(s) as explained under R277-520-10 with approval from the USOE specialist(s) in the endorsement subject areas.

D. On an annual basis, local boards/charter school boards shall request letters of authorization for teachers who are teaching classes for which they are not endorsed.

#### **R277-520-8. Highly Qualified Teachers.**

A. A secondary teacher (7-12) is considered highly qualified if the teacher meets the requirements of R277-501-4.

B. An elementary/early childhood teacher (grades K-8) is considered highly qualified if the teacher meets the requirements of R277-501-5.

#### **R277-520-9. School District/Charter School Specific Competency-based Licensed Teachers.**

A. The following procedures and timelines apply to the employment of educators who have not completed the traditional licensing process under R277-520-5A, B, or C:

(1) A local board/charter school board may apply to the Board for a school district/charter school specific competency-based license to fill a position in the district.

(2) The employing school district shall request a school district/charter school specific competency-based license no later than 60 days after the date of the individual's first day of employment.

(3) The application for the school district/charter school specific competency-based license for an individual to teach one or more core academic subjects shall provide documentation of:

(a) the individual's bachelors degree; and

(b) for a K-6 grade teacher, the satisfactory results of the rigorous state test including subject knowledge and teaching skills in the required core academic subjects under Section 53A-6-104.5(3)(ii) as approved by the Board; or

(c) for the teacher in grades 7-12, demonstration of a high Level of competency in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches by completion of an academic major, a graduate degree, course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, advanced certification or credentialing, results or scores of a rigorous state core academic subject test in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches.

(4) The application for the school district/charter school specific competency-based license for non-core teachers in grades K-12 shall provide documentation of:

(a) a bachelors degree, associates degree or skill certification; and

(b) skills, talents or abilities specific to the teaching assignment, as determined by the local board/charter school board.

(5) Following receipt of documentation, the USOE shall approve a district/charter school specific competency-based license.

(6) If an individual employed under a school district/charter school specific competency-based license leaves the district before the end of the employment period, the district shall notify the USOE Licensing Section regarding the end-of-employment date.

(7) The school district/charter school specific competency-based license for an individual's district/charter school specific competency-based license shall be valid only in the district/charter school that originally requested the school district/charter school specific competency-based license and for the individual originally employed under the school district/charter school specific competency-based license.

B. The written copy of the state-issued district-specific competency-based license shall prominently state the name of the school district/charter school followed by DISTRICT/CHARTER SCHOOL-SPECIFIC COMPETENCY-BASED LICENSE.

C. A school district/charter school may change the assignment of a school district/charter school-specific competency-based license holder but notice to USOE shall be required and additional competency-based documentation may be required for the teacher to remain qualified or highly qualified.

D. School district/charter school specific competency-based license holders are at-will employees consistent with Section 53A-8-106(5).

#### **R277-520-10. Routes to Appropriate Endorsements for Teachers.**

Teachers shall be appropriately endorsed for their teaching assignment(s). To be highly qualified:

A. teachers may obtain the required endorsement(s) with a major or composite major or major equivalency consistent with their

teaching assignment(s), including appropriate pedagogical competencies; or

B. teachers who have satisfactorily completed a minimum of nine semester hours of USOE-approved university level courses may complete a professional development plan under an SAEP in the appropriate subject area(s) with approval from USOE Curriculum specialists; or

C. teachers may demonstrate competency in the subject area(s) of their teaching assignment(s). In order to be endorsed through demonstrated competency, the educator shall pass designated Board-approved content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge assessments as they become available.

D. Individuals shall be properly endorsed consistent with R277-520-3 or have USOE-approved SAEPs. Otherwise, the Board may withhold professional staff cost program funds.

#### **R277-520-11. Board-Approved Endorsement Program (SAEP).**

A. Teachers in any educational program who are assigned to teach out of their area(s) of endorsement and who have at least nine hours of USOE-approved university level courses shall participate in an SAEP and make satisfactory progress within the period of the SAEP as determined by USOE specialists.

B. The employing school district shall identify teachers who do not meet the state qualified definition and provide a written justification to the USOE.

C. Individuals participating in SAEPs shall demonstrate progress toward completion of the required endorsement(s) annually, as determined jointly by the school district/charter school and the USOE.

D. An SAEP may be granted for one two-year period and may be renewed by the USOE, upon written justification from the school district, for one additional two-year period.

#### **R277-520-12. Background Check Requirement and Withholding of State Funds for Non-Compliance.**

A. Educators qualified under any provision of this rule shall also satisfy the criminal background requirement of Section 53A-3-410 prior to unsupervised access to students.

B. If LEAs do not appropriately employ and assign teachers consistent with this rule, they may have state appropriated professional staff cost program funds withheld pursuant to R277-486, Professional Staff Cost Formula.

C. Local boards/charter school boards shall report highly qualified educators in core academic subjects and educators who do not meet the requirements of highly qualified educators in core academic subjects beginning July 1, 2003.

**KEY: educator, license, assignment**

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Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3;  
53A-1-401(3); 53A-6-104(2)(a)